

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 21-54—SB 972

Judiciary Committee

Appropriations Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNICATION SERVICES IN
CORRECTIONAL AND JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITIES**

SUMMARY: Starting October 1, 2022, this act requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner and the judicial branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD) executive director to provide free communication services to inmates in correctional facilities and child detainees in juvenile detention facilities, respectively, and to the people with whom the inmates and detainees communicate. Regarding these free services, the act requires these officials to provide voice communication services ("phone services"), but allows them to supplement those services with other communication services, including video communication and email services. The act prohibits the state from receiving revenue for providing communication services to inmates and detainees. (PA 21-2, June Special Session (JSS), § 52, moves up the implementation date for the above inmate-related provisions from October 1, 2022, to July 1, 2022, and requires that each inmate be eligible to use the provided phone services for at least 90 minutes each day he or she is confined if it does not interfere with a correctional facility's standard operations.)

Beginning June 16, 2021, the act prohibits the DOC commissioner and CSSD executive director from replacing in-person contact visits that inmates and detainees may be eligible for with phone services or other communication services. (PA 21-2, JSS, § 53, delays the act's prohibition on the CSSD executive director from June 16, 2021, until July 1, 2022.)

The act also repeals the laws requiring the Department of Administrative Services to transfer some of the revenue derived from inmate phone calls to (1) DOC to expand inmate educational services and re-entry initiatives and (2) the Judicial Department for staff and services needed to expand the probation transition program and technical violation units.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the repealer section is effective on October 1, 2022.

BACKGROUND

Child Definition

By law and under the act, a child is generally anyone under age 18 who is not legally emancipated but for delinquency matters and proceedings includes a person who:

1. was at least age 7 when he or she committed an alleged delinquent act and

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is (a) under age 18 and not legally emancipated or (b) age 18 or older but committed the act when under age 18 or

2. is over age 18 and (a) violates a court order or probation condition related to a delinquency proceeding or (b) willfully fails to appear in response to a summons or at any other delinquency proceeding for which he or she received notice (CGS § 46b-120).